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ABSTRACT

Partnerships between schools and businesses are becoming more frequent and more reciprocal as the two find common interests; the Salem-Keizer (Oregon) Public Schools provide a nationally recognized example of such a partnership. Salem's program began in 1981 with a joint school board and Chamber of Commerce policy statement. Despite economic hardships, the program has since grown to include 44 schools. The educators' enthusiasm and their commitment to reciprocation and to thorough monitoring have encouraged businesses to volunteer for partnerships. Typically, the program coordinator acts as "broker" to pair schools with suitable firms. After agreeing on major objectives, activities, and evaluation methods, the partners proceed with frequent bilateral planning sessions and annual reviews. Salem's program emphasizes sharing human resources. Businesses respond eagerly to the schools' needs; benefits for participating firms include school facility privileges and educational activities. District policies mandate that businesses be closely involved throughout planning, but guard against ethical conflicts. Schools must ensure that partnership activities relate to basic skills or career development curriculum. This program, like other promising ventures underway in Oregon's Lincoln and Washington Counties, embodies five elements of success: long-term goals; key officials' involvement and broad-based support; mutually developed written policies; frequent planning sessions; and continuous, centralized communication and monitoring. (MCG)

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# Salem Program Demonstrates Five Keys to a Successful Business–School Partnership

Mary Cihak Jensen

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# Preface

Many of the most prevalent problems facing schools today involve the needs for additional financial support of schools, for education relevant to the rapidly changing job market, and for closer ties between school and community. Voters seem reluctant to financially support schools with higher taxes, and they sometimes voice their doubts about the effectiveness of the schools in preparing children for the world of work. The result is an adversarial relationship between school and community.

The idea of school-business partnerships presents some welcome solutions to the problem of how to get the "public" back into public education. Steering away from the idea of schools as recipients of public philanthropy, the emphasis is now on the mutual benefits of curriculum-based cooperation between schools and the local business community.

Continuing the Oregon School Study Council's practice of reporting on innovative and successful programs, we are pleased to begin our 1985-86 series with a description of the partnership between Salem-Keizer School District 24J and the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce. This award-winning program further displays the kind of insight and

energy that keeps Oregon schools in the national limelight of effective public education.

Joining our OSSC staff this year is Mary Cihak Jensen, the author of this Bulletin. Jensen has an extensive background both in teaching and educational psychology, and is currently enrolled in the educational psychology doctoral program at the University of Oregon.

Philip K. Piele
Executive Secretary

# Contents


Preface iii

Introduction 1

National Trends in Business-School Alliances 3

- Increasing Recognition of Mutual Goals 4
- Characteristics of Effective Partnerships 5

Salem-Keizer Public Schools' Business Partnership in Education Program 7

- Development of the Partnership 8
- Continued Growth in Partnerships 11
- Matching Schools with Businesses 13
- Ongoing Planning Between Partners 14
- An Emphasis on Human Resource Sharing 16
- Benefits to Businesses 18
- Policies Guide Activities 20
- Integrating Activitis into the Curriculum 22
- What's Ahead in the Salem-Keizer Schools? 22
- Where Can Other Districts Begin? 23

Two Emerging Business-School Relationships 25

- Lincoln County School District's P.I.E. 25
- Washington County's Business Education Compact 26

Conclusion 29

Bibliography 30

Interviews 31

Appendix A 33

Appendix B 34

Appendix C 35

Appendix D 36

# Introduction

One corporation's managers assist the local school district in developing a Consumer Economics curriculum. In turn, the schools provide meeting space for the corporation's own employee training.

A car dealership offers a middle school the use of a van for field trips. The school staff provides technical assistance to the dealership as it computerizes its operations.

Department store personnel teach fourth graders how fractions and grammar relate to merchandising. School district personnel train that company's staff in time management.

High school students utilize a corporation's computer center. That firm's employees play a weekly basketball game in the school gym.

Relationships between schools and the business community have come a long way since their inception as career education and work-study programs. They have also progressed beyond the stage of one-way philanthropy. Today the key word is partnership. Schools and businesses are discovering that their goals and needs are similar. Their new alliances support excellence in education as well as stability in the local community's economy.

This Bulletin focuses on an Oregon program that has gained national recognition, the partnership forged by School District 24J and the Salem

Area Chamber of Commerce. As a prelude to the description of the Salem area program, chapter 1 briefly examines the reasons for the growing nationwide interest in business-school partnerships and highlights characteristics that distinguish successful partnerships from those that have failed.

Following the Salem story in chapter 2, chapter 3 describes two additional models to illustrate how business-school partnerships can benefit communities of any size. Lincoln County School District provides an example of a coordinated program uniting the efforts of small rural schools, while the Washington County schools apply the partnership concept to a more metropolitan, high technology environment. The three programs together demonstrate the power of business partnership in education, whether the community includes major corporations, small enterprises, or family businesses. Together they also illustrate a rapidly growing trend in Oregon as more school districts and businesses share human and material resources.

# National Trends in Business-School Alliances

Across the United States, school and industrial leaders are combining resources to improve education. This nationwide increase in business-school relationships appears to stem from a growing recognition that quality education is everyone's business. The 1983 Task Force on Education for Economic Growth urged corporate and business leaders to improve schools by actively and publicly supporting public education.

President Reagan, commending the involvement of industry in education, contended there was still more work to be done. "America's future," he stated, "is dependent upon the health and vitality of her educational system." Businesses whose future employees are now students in the nation's schools were called upon to become involved in their education:

> The private sector has much to offer...helping educators identify the learning needs of our society; encouraging professional exchanges between educators and businesses; contributing expertise, financial resources, and equipment; and providing technical assistance in school administration and curriculum development.

Rutgers University has established a leadership commission, Public Responsibility for Educational Success (PRES), to mobilize New Jersey's efforts to improve the quality of the state's education. Rutgers President Edward J. Bloustein explains, "Our public schools mirror the

weaknesses and strengths of the public which supports them. They will only markedly improve when the public at large begins to address appropriately its responsibility for the success or failure of the public schools."

### Increasing Recognition of Mutual Goals

Ironically, this heightened awareness of the importance of education is simultaneous with the public schools' increasing financial dilemmas. Dale Mann, reporting public school and private sector interaction, points out that schools more than ever need enduring allies. He explains that mutual understanding between schools and businesses may mature into political collaboration. Such collaboration can result in more adequate permanent support for the schools. This lasting political support may benefit schools much more than the short-lived material contributions they often seek.

Nationally, there is a move away from the term Adopt-A-School, which was used earlier to describe a business' relationship with a school. New York's former chancellor, Frank Macchiarola, insisted schools were not orphans and not available for adoption. The new term, Business-School Partnerships, emphasizes that both sides of the alliance have something to offer the other and that their needs and goals are similar. Because effective schools contribute to the stability of their community, educators and business people are mutually concerned about student learning. The new term also implies that the partners will share resources at both a human and material level. Exchanges of expertise between educators and business people are increasingly common

in the new partnerships. Business people are increasingly visible in schools, providing assistance in classrooms, incentives for student progress, and career guidance.

### Characteristics of Effective Partnerships

The growing trend in business involvement in education, then, is toward lasting partnerships between businesses and schools. In studying nationwide trends, Mann found that in most communities the initiative has come from school districts whose superintendents provide most of the original impetus in approaching businesses. School board members nationally have played varying roles in this effort. Some board members function as a district's most active links to the business community, whereas others are uninvolved. Districts with effective business relationships cultivate the involvement of a company's top management, their own school principals, and the broad participation of employees in both settings.

Successful districts plan carefully for long-term relationships with businesses and develop policy statements that will guide the interaction. From the beginning, communication is designed to support mutual trust and respect between the partners. These successful programs ensure good communication through a central coordination and monitoring function. They typically invest in the program by providing personnel for its continued coordination.

In contrast, less successful programs are haphazardly designed, lack supportive monitoring, and are concerned only with short-term projects. These short-term projects tend to be faddish, tacked on at

the periphery of a school's curriculum. On the other hand, successful programs incorporate businesses' resources at the core of instruction: the teaching of basic skills as well as vocational competency reflects the expertise and insight of the business partner. In effective business-school ventures, purposes are wide, participation is broad.

# Salem-Keizer Public Schools' Business Partnership in Education Program

School District 24J serves 23,000 students who live in Oregon's state capital Salem, its neighboring town Keizer, and smaller outlying communities. The area is characterized as predominantly middle-class with the school district as a major employer, second only to state government. In the last five years, the community has suffered economic setbacks affecting primarily its lumbering, food processing, and paper-making industries. The effects of these cutbacks have rippled through the area's economy.

All Oregon schools rely upon voter-approved levies for their ongoing financial support. In the community served by the Salem-Keizer Public Schools, 72 percent of the households do not have children. This figure is close to the national average, making Salem's need for widespread community support a concern most districts can share.

A visitor to the Salem area can hardly miss signs of that community support. In particular, evidences of active business-school partnerships permeate the community. Bulletin boards in restaurants honor a student of the week; store windows display children's art; a poster in the TV cable company office explains a wellness program for school and business employees.

In Salem, whether one speaks to school district employees or to business managers, common themes tend to run through their conversations about the schools. Shared values are operating here and they may well be what brings the district national recognition.

In June 1985, the White House honored the partnership between the Salem-Keizer Public Schools and the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce. The President's Council on Private Sector Initiatives named the program as one of twenty outstanding business-school partnerships nationwide. The same year, the annual Memphis conference on business and school relationships recognized the accomplishments of the Salem project. This year the district received the National School Public Relations Association's highest honor, the Gold Medallion Award, for its public relations program.

Its national recognition should come as no surprise to those who study the Business Partnership in Education Program. The Salem area alliance exemplifies those elements shown by research as characterizing effective partnerships.

## Development of the Partnership

School District 24J planned carefully for long-term relationships with the community. In 1970, Salem schools opened their doors to neighborhood residents as Community Schools, which exchanged benefits with the citizenry. Volunteers have since entered the schools, bringing the resources of the community to the curriculum. In turn, the schools have functioned as community centers, providing continuing education, recreation, health, and cultural programs. The recent business-school

partnerships are a natural outgrowth of the Community Schools movement.

As in other effective programs nationwide, the philosophy of the superintendent has provided impetus to the district's community relations. William M. Kendrick, superintendent of District 24J, traces the evolution of his own thinking:

> I have to admit that when I first came here, I didn't know if I wanted to open the schools to their owners. We've all had to rid ourselves of the notion that educators own the schools. We're a major corporation and taxpayers are our stockholders. Right now we only hire people into this district who have a warm, secure feeling about relating to this community.

Until 1981, Salem area industry played a conventional role in the schools. Businesses were involved in career education and work-study programs, and business representatives served on the district's community relations board. Yet the seeds for more intense cooperation were present within the Community Schools philosophy. In 1981, the district secured funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Community Education to match ten elementary schools with business partners. Broad participation in planning began even at this early stage of development. The Salem Area Chamber of Commerce agreed to cosponsor the program; a steering committee comprised of district and chamber representatives guided the project. The school board, teachers' union, and school administrators voiced their support.

The district handbook, Business Partnership in Education, specifies the goals of the partnerships:

1. To bring business people into a school to work with students, teachers and administrators on projects which the school believes will be helpful and which business people are qualified to accomplish.

2. To give students a realistic picture of the business world and an understanding of the free enterprise system.

3. To supplement classroom studies with relevant learning experiences in business and industry.

4. To give business people an understanding of the educational system and an opportunity to help in its improvement.

5. To share the school's resources with the business community.

The steering committee produced a policy statement that guided the matching of the ten schools with their businesses. Policy and planning continued to determine the nature of the partnership activities. Roger Spring wrote the initial grant, laying the groundwork for the program's future success. He later left the school district to join the private sector where he has been instrumental in involving his employer in the Business Partnership program. Patty Komko ensured the continued widespread involvement of the district and community through a strong communications system, which the current programs still utilize. Her visits and phone calls spurred contact between each school and its business, while general bulletins communicated each pair's activity to the other partnerships.

One year later, federal funding ceased. Simultaneously the district faced a major financial crisis and was unable to continue the district-level coordination of the fledgling partnerships. Lacking central direction, partnerships tended to flounder. Nonetheless, enthusiasm for the partnership concept was strong enough to persuade the district to designate part of the next year's federal block grant monies to revive the program. Since that time, the school board has committed annual funds to provide coordination of the partnerships.

Expansion and enrichment now symbolize the area's business-school program: forty-four partnerships currently link individual schools to

businesses, nonprofit organizations, and state agencies. Over 2,800 students benefit from such links. Two half-time employees coordinate the district's elementary and secondary school partnerships. As part of the district community relations effort, the business-school partnerships receive some further assistance from the district's twenty half-time paraprofessional community school assistants and eight regional community school coordinators.

### Continued Growth in Partnerships

Four years ago, intense planning went into the original grant application. Today those efforts to involve so many forces continue to pay off. Business people sense ownership in the original plan. Chuck Austin, president of the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce and a State Farm Insurance agent, calls the chamber "partners in the partnership." Indeed, the chamber continues to be involved in virtually every aspect of the program, from policy-review to matching businesses with their schools. Austin himself appeared before the school board this year to announce the unanimous support of the chamber's board of directors and to seek continued funding for the program. He believes the district's cost in funding the program is negligible compared to its results: "The schools get a leveraged effect from the use of their money."

Why does the partnership movement continue to grow in Salem? Austin says growth stems first from the commitment School District 24J has to tying itself with the community: "The superintendent and school board are committed to making these relationships go two ways. The schools contribute to businesses just as the businesses support the

schools."

Word of rewarding relationships with the schools spreads quickly through the business community, encouraging new businesses to seek involvement. In fact, an unexpectedly early expansion of the program into the secondary schools occurred following a joint school district and Chamber of Commerce breakfast last year. T. Wendell Butler, assistant director of the White House Office of Private Sector Initiatives, spoke enthusiastically of business-school relationships at the breakfast. The publisher of the local newspaper, present in the audience, immediately declared his intention to form a partnership with an area high school. That same breakfast prompted five more local businesses and the State Department of Commerce and Transportation to request school partners. Four other local agencies requested information to help establish their own programs.

Austin further credits success to the "infectious enthusiasm" of the district's community relations staff. The business partnership coordinators share their enthusiasm for program goals at school staff workshops, district administrative sessions, and Chamber of Commerce meetings. A monthly bulletin details activities between the schools and businesses, recognizes contributions, and promotes planned projects. This newsletter encourages continual self-evaluation; the March 1985 bulletin, for example, asks schools and businesses to consider these questions:

1. Are all our employees, students and parents aware that the business and school are involved in a partnership?
2. Do we have an action plan in place to cover activities for the remainder of the year?

3. Are we planning some type of wrap-up, thank-you activity for the year's end?

4. Are accurate records being kept for future reference and for evaluation purposes?

5. Are we meeting goals set out at the beginning of the partnership?

Such informal self-evaluation is augmented by the district's annual formal evaluation in which business and school personnel respond to questionnaires that uncover principal strengths and weaknesses of the program.

**Matching Schools with Businesses**

Since the emphasis is on long-term relationships, is it any wonder that the process for matching schools with businesses sounds a bit like marriage brokering? The district's publication Business Partnership in Education describes the steps to forming the partnerships. Inquiries may come from either a school or a business. If a school initiates the request to participate in the partnership program, the district coordinator works between the school staff and the steering committee to find an appropriate business partner. The needs and resources that the school staff have spelled out guide the steering committee's decision. A business person representing the Chamber of Commerce on the steering committee then approaches the potential business partner.

At this point in the history of the Salem area program, businesses frequently initiate the matching process. They direct their request for a partner to the coordinator and steering committee, who help them assess the resources they might offer a school. In this case, the school district coordinator acts as "broker" and approaches appropriate

schools, seeking a match for the business.

In the next phase, the chief executive of the business, the principal of the school, and the coordinator meet formally to compare resources and needs. This initial agreement outlines major objectives, activities, and evaluation strategy for the alliance.

### Ongoing Planning Between Partners

Thorough planning typifies each stage of the business-school relationships. Mutually developed action plans and time lines reinforce the written partnership agreement. The degree of preparedness before any action surprised Bret Rios, chairman of the steering committee and general manager of Viacom Cable Television. He found that whereas businesses are accustomed to short-term projects and rather rapid decision-making, schools have long-term goals and a consensus-oriented organizational structure. While top business managers may easily make commitments for their firms, school principals make decisions only after involving the many professionals who staff their institutions. "Schools and businesses are different cultures," Rios says. He advises businesses who will relate to schools to be open to these differences, pointing out that communication between the partners helps one understand the other.

Frequent planning sessions between the individual school and business help develop a pace of implementation that both partners find comfortable. Rios' firm, for example, invites students for weekly tours. "That's a simple process for us," he explains, "but I'm learning it can be complicated from the school's point of view. They have

scheduling concerns, transportation needs, and parental permissions to secure." Rios has learned, too, that educators will need a reason for every activity they introduce: he designs his company tours now with the awareness that the experience needs to be integrated with the classroom curriculum.

Indeed, a goal of the business-education partnerships is to increase the community's understanding of the schools. Typically the partner school invites personnel from the partner business to school luncheons, classroom tours, and assemblies. As the partnership matures, business employees tend to spend more and more time volunteering in their school. Superintendent Kendrick sees that contact as a major benefit to the schools. "When business people come into our schools, they see teachers working hard, educators carrying immense responsibility. They leave supportive of us."

Knowledge of the partners goes both ways. Salem-Keizer district staff members make an effort to learn about the businesses, their corporate priorities, how a company "thinks" and makes judgments. Several members of the community relations staff routinely attend Chamber of Commerce meetings and entrepreneurship conferences. William "Skip" Liebertz, executive assistant to the superintendent and head of the community relations department, says the more the district staff knows about the business world, the more they understand that businesses and schools have common interests in the community. Among their numerous civic involvements, Kendrick serves on the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Liebertz is a member of United Way's Board, and Greg Hansen, community relations specialist, was founding

cochairperson of the Salem Celebration. Clearly School District 24J personnel are central to the life of their community.

### An Emphasis on Human Resource Sharing

The Salem area business partnership goal statement highlights the exchange of human, not material, resources. The school district stresses that the presence of business people in classrooms enriches curriculum and motivates student learning and behavior. This emphasis is not shared by all business involvement programs nationwide. Particularly in more metropolitan areas, school districts may approach corporations asking only for donations, not interaction with their staffs. That merely material emphasis appears to have doomed many business-school relationships. As researcher Mann explains, some districts may find that they have exchanged short-term material gain for long-lasting collaboration. Lynne Burco, coordinator of the elementary school partnerships, strongly agrees. "Educators are great scavengers," she warns. She believes that the initial lure of free materials and equipment may distract a school from the broader purposes of the alliance.

Protecting the nonmaterial focus of the relationships takes creativity as well as self-monitoring.

Each year the partnerships are redefined, the school and business "people resources" reassessed. In fact, imagination characterizes Salem area industry's contribution to students' educational experience. Radio station personnel help students write and produce public service announcements about school activities. Students routinely "shadow"

business people, learning from the commercial world through their day on the job. An insurance firm sponsors an elaborate career day. The cable television company produces a video scrapbook of the school year. Hospital employees teach hygiene classes, while area banks assist in consumer economics instruction. Companies share sophisticated technical skill with their schools.

Besides participating in students' basic skills and career instruction, area businesses commonly offer incentives for student achievement and citizenship. Students of the month are invited on company tours; awards assemblies recognize varied talents; stores display children's art and writing; even Robbi the Robot encourages student progress. This community's concern for its young people is tangible: one company's six-foot-tall Valentine to its school children seems to symbolize common feelings among the businesses.

Despite the fact that the schools hesitate to ask their partners for material resources--or perhaps because of that hesitation--the Salem area businesses appear increasingly eager to meet their schools' needs. Carla Moyer, coordinator of the secondary school partnerships, says the businesses consistently seek ways they can help their schools. "They tell me, 'We wish our school would ask for more'." Actually, a mindset seems to operate here in both the schools and the businesses. As in any partnership, the two sides think often of each other. Torry Johnson, principal of Morningside Elementary School, finds it natural for his staff to think of their business partner, a lock-box manufacturer, when they need technical expertise. For example, when the teachers considered the problem of emergency communications between the

playground and school office, they conceived of a lock-box apparatus that might be designed by their partner.

As a district, the Salem-Keizer Public Schools have forged some enduring and powerful alliances. Despite the area's economic problems, within a seven month period voters passed three major levies totalling over sixty-seven million dollars to support School District 24J. Superintendent Kendrick believes this success directly relates to his employees' involvement in their community.

**Benefits to Businesses**

In their move from the Adopt-A-School terminology to talk of partnerships, the Salem-Keizer schools began to focus upon the two-way nature of their community relations. Liebertz finds the adoption metaphor condescending to schools; he works to ensure that the schools function as respected partners with their businesses. As partners, the schools share risks and investments as well as benefits. The schools open their facilities--their auditoriums, gyms, sports fields, computer labs, child care rooms, and conference rooms--for their business partners' training or recreational programs. Schools lend their partners audiovisual equipment. In one elementary school, children decorate "their" department store's Christmas tree and sing carols during holiday shopping hours. In fact, it may not be long before industry's investment in children's technical education pays off by coming full circle. Some classes are studying ways they might help businesses computerize their operations.

School staff members reciprocate businesses' gifts by offering

training to business employees in time management, group processes, and communication skills. The "Heart at Work" project coordinated by Liebertz' office further exemplifies the continued school-community cooperation. The school staff secured funding through the American Heart Association for a wellness program that will serve school and business employees. Individual school staffs and their business partners may choose to participate in a variety of joint educational programs, ranging from Stop Smoking courses to aerobics.

Businesses report other, less tangible but no less significant, gains from the program. Often managers find their firm's relationship with a school improves their own employees' morale. A company's line employees, teaching classes or conducting tours, receive unusual opportunities to communicate about the business. Rios explains, "The students and the staff at our school show my employees they appreciate what they do. The children write thank you notes. The staff invites us to lunch." Businesses get increased visibility from their involvement in the schools: schools acknowledge their partners' contributions on bulletin boards and in parent newsletters. In this way, participating firms enhance their public image as concerned community members.

In addition to the informal recognition a business receives from its individual school, the school district ensures that businesses are recognized formally for their contributions. Hansen describes several means of acknowledgment: an annual ceremony honors one outstanding business and one individual contributor; the yearly brunch recognizes all business partners; the partnerships are featured in a district newsletter mailed to every household in the area; the district writes

news releases to publicize business activity in the schools. Between the school-level appreciation and the district-level recognition, participating businesses can be certain that they are appreciated.

Just as the schools have long-range goals they hope to meet from the partnerships, so the businesses have a long-range perspective. Business leaders Austin and Rios insist the commercial community must care about its young people. They foresee the impact children will have on the life of the community, as future voters, business employees, teachers. Austin believes business people's interest in the schools will stimulate student skill development and give direction to their career goals. "Education is our key to economic development. Given this state's economic difficulties, we'd better be all the more concerned about our schools."

**Policies Guide Activities**

Carefully formulated policies guide effective partnerships nationwide. School District 24J directs each participating school and business to agree on a thirteen-point policy statement. Similar to other successful programs, each partnership begins with the philosophical commitment of the chief executive officer of the business and the principal of the school. Although both business and school intend to improve the educational environment, both sides are reminded that the school staff is primarily responsible for students' learning and well-being. Thus, the school maintains final approval on all decisions.

Although educators have this final approval, the policy clarifies

that "business partners should be viewed as an integral part of the school." Thorough planning involves the business partner at each stage, from developing goals to evaluating their accomplishment. The school is reminded that the sharing of human resources is mutual in the partnership. Partnership agreements are made for one school year and reevaluated annually.

Because one of the benefits businesses receive in the partnerships is increased community visibility, educators consider possible ethical issues. Principal Johnson believes that the school district has directly addressed and resolved the conflict-of-interest issue. He describes the concern as a hurdle the schools have passed. Burco agrees: "We have educational needs and businesses can assist us. But no, our purpose is clearly not to sell the company product." Liebertz finds the policy statement a good guideline and points to the partnership concept itself as a way of resolving possible conflicts:

> We have one-to-one relationships where sensitivity to each other and trust make give-and-take more commonplace. Let's face it: five years ago in schools we would take anything. Now we see ourselves as partners in this community.
>
> Take an example: years ago, the only link between industry and the classroom was through curriculum packages developed nationally, and sometimes only self-servingly, by businesses. In the Salem partnerships, more commonly school and business employees combine their talents to produce materials which are really needed. The business's logo can appear on the material, but the key is that the school jointly developed the content and determined that it is of substantial value to its students.

The nature of the new partnerships, then, may prevent rather than cause ethical concerns.

The use of school facilities and equipment has never been an issue here. The philosophy of the community school is ingrained in the Salem

area. Open facilities are a key element of that philosophy.

### Integrating Activities into the Curriculum

Part of the school's responsibility in a partnership is to ensure that activities relate to basic skills development or career education studies. When the Morningside Elementary School staff toured its business partner's lock-box manufacturing plant, teachers saw ways the partner could assist with the curriculum. Elisa Steidel Reckendorf, library media teacher, saw numerous possibilities just in the international marketing division; geography, map skills, communication, and transportation units came to her mind. Troy Costales, the school's community school assistant, saw a wide range of technical skills the company could offer teachers. Principal Johnson was pleased with the student tour schedule the company offered. He saw the tour as a way children could learn early just why they need to learn to add and subtract and read.

The two district coordinators emphasize the "fit" between the regular classroom curriculum and partnership activities. They are currently developing an outline of typical business-school interactions that integrate easily into the course of studies at each grade level. From the administrators' point of view, the challenge may be to maintain the enthusiasm of the businesses while school staffs determine how they might use those contributions in the basic instructional program.

### What's Ahead in the Salem-Keizer Schools?

Although the Salem area program began with a rather slow and

conservative growth pattern, recently the number of partnerships has nearly tripled. The coordinating staff has grown in equal measure. Secondary schools and government agencies are becoming involved. Rapid expansion is certainly possible. But if the past is any clue to the future, School District 24J and the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce will plan carefully, paying equal attention to cementing existing relationships. Rios is cautious: "The word of success spread among the businesses; word of deterioration would spread as quickly."

Nearly all the schools and businesses involved now have maintained the same partners through the history of the program. Changing partners is the exception rather than the rule but some foresee that more partnerships may rotate if the schools or businesses need variety or reenergizing in the future.

### Where Can Other Districts Begin?

Asked what advice they might offer schools that wish to develop similar programs, individual Salem educators consistently urge the same action: "Plan. Reach out. Plan. Plan."

Principal Johnson reflects on his experience in a small community:

> There were two teachers for eight grades, and my wife was the other teacher. We just started knocking on doors in that town. As it turned out, the owner of the only cafe was a gifted woodworker. He came to school and got kids so excited about learning....Nearly every place has its Mom and Pop store. That's a resource to teachers: that business buys from wholesalers, merchandises its inventory, counts its profits. There are things to learn there.

Reckendorf compares the business partnership movement to the computers in education trend. One or two staff members may be interested in beginning a program but gradually more get involved as

teachers innovating in this particular way "share trade secrets." In a school with administrative interest in the partnership, one department, or even one teacher, might begin. Hansen recommends that educators seek information from the Oregon Community Education Association, an organization that has spearheaded business-education relationships statewide.

Kendrick encourages other district superintendents: "This has been worth every moment I've spent. Our schools have received thousands of dollars in in-kind resources--notice, I'm not saying money. You can't put a price tag on what we've gained. We've got access to knowledge, to people, to our community."

Kendrick and Liebertz speak frequently at national conferences, but Kendrick downplays the role of conferences in establishing a working program. Instead, he invites colleagues to visit the school district. He recalls that his district's Community Schools plan began when forty-two Salem citizens, representing all facets of the community, visited Flint, Michigan. The Salem visitors each met with Flint citizens in similar positions in order to understand the program in action. "In the development of any program," he says, "we need to match up superintendents, school board members, principals, and teachers with colleagues who have had some success.

"Just watch out for people's comfort level," Kendrick advises. Burco similarly suggests a slow start, suggesting that districts begin by inviting business people to their schools: "If they just hold a little kid's hand, they leave that school with an increased awareness."

# Two Emerging Business–School Relationships

**Lincoln County School District's P.I.E.**

While the Salem-Keizer model demonstrates an established program of business-school relationships in the state's capital, Lincoln County School District provides an example of a new program linking a number of small rural settings. The district serves 5,000 students in 16 schools along Oregon's coastline, from Lincoln City south to Yachats. An outgrowth of the district's school volunteer and community education programs, Partners in Education is a recently formulated two-way association between the coastal schools and businesses. P.I.E., as it is called, shows that rural schools can form business-education partnerships both economically and efficiently.

Don Lindly, community education coordinator for the Lincoln County Schools, describes his office as a "clearinghouse, a brokerage for the developing partnerships." Because of the geographical nature of the community, partnerships may be with small businesses or groups of businesses, such as a Chamber of Commerce or Rotary Club. As an example of the interaction, a Waldport cable company works with students to telecast sporting events, school board meetings, and community events. The Lincoln County Association of Chambers of Commerce, a coordinating

council of six regional chambers, cosponsors events with the school district. In cooperation with the district, the Newport Rotary Club offers a speakers bureau and career counseling service available to students and community members.

Like other successful endeavors, thorough planning and communication characterize the Lincoln County program. Lindly believes that no matter how small the district, it is important that someone have the responsibility for the coordination of the business-school relationships: "Someone needs to match the needs and resources, do the trouble-shooting, ensure the recognition." A program without followthrough, he contends, can do more damage than good; for example, volunteers who contribute consistently without any obvious appreciation from the schools naturally become discouraged. As a district-level program, P.I.E. is in a position to help schools reciprocate in the partnerships. The district lends businesses its facilities and equipment; it offers business people training programs ranging from computer education to CPR to employee career development.

In keeping with the national trend, Lincoln County School District is expanding its business-school program with the addition of one staff member. "Call us at this time next year," Lindly says, "and we'll have so much more to tell you."

### Washington County's Business Education Compact

One year has made a dramatic difference in Washington County, an area west of Portland known as the "Sunset High-Tech Corridor." Last spring the Business-Education Compact was launched and, in the words of

its founders, "hit the road running." Unlike most national business-education partnerships, which are initiated by school districts, the thirty-two-member compact originated with the Hillsboro and Beaverton Chambers of Commerce, then spread countywide. The business arm of the compact, the sixteen-member Business Task Force, assumes major responsibility for the success of the endeavor. The second half of the compact, a sixteen-member Education Advisory Committee, is headed by Al Miller, director of career and community education for Hillsboro Union High School District. Miller is pleased that the compact originated with businesses: "The program is stronger because business sees its advantages so clearly."

An optimistic and lively first newsletter communicates the compact's enthusiasm for its goals: the support of excellence in existing schools and the establishment of a "world-class" postsecondary education and research center. These goals, the task force believes, serve the county's existing industry and attract new businesses.

The compact has singled out four major projects for implementation. The first aims to link the county's 112 schools with individual business partners to share resources. The second, "Two Way Street," will offer educators summer or one-year assistantships in business settings and bring business people into classrooms as supplementary instructors. Third, the student career passport project will help secondary students document how their competencies relate to entry-level job skills that employers seek. The fourth program will expand Washington County postsecondary education to provide research and training opportunities in high technology engineering, computer science, and business

management.

Miller is confident about the alliance: "The ground work has been laid and we are ready to move forward. Our enthusiasm is high and so are our goals."

# Conclusion

Nationwide commentators on business-education relationships agree that in successful programs the collaboration between school districts and the commercial community results in improved educational quality and enhanced local economic stability. These successful programs share key elements:

1. The schools and businesses both envision long-term, rather than episodic, goals.

2. Program developers first involve key industrial leaders and school administrators, then seek the widespread support of all forces that will be involved in project implementation.

3. Mutually developed written policies guide the interactions between schools and businesses.

4. In frequent planning sessions, school and business representatives define mutual needs and resources.

5. Central coordinators encourage program stability by maintaining continuous communication and monitoring.

As an established program, the Salem area's Business Partnership in Education exemplifies each of these elements of successful collaboration. The long-term success of the emerging programs in Lincoln County and Washington County may be predicted based on their current attention to those same characteristics. These three endeavors, as well as similar programs statewide, appear destined to make major contributions to Oregon's educational and economic well-being.

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# Interviews

Chuck Austin, president, Salem Area Chamber of Commerce and agent, State Farm Insurance, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

Lynne Burco, elementary business partnership coordinator, School District 24J, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

Troy Costales, community school assistant, School District 24J, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

Guy Faust, executive secretary, Oregon Community Education Association, Eugene, Oregon. Telephone interview June 8, 1985.

Greg Hansen, community relations specialist, School District 24J, Salem Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985, and telephone interview June 7, 1985.

Torry Johnson, principal, Morningside Elementary School, School District 24J, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

William M. Kendrick, superintendent, School District 24J, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

William "Skip" Liebertz, executive assistant to the superintendent, School District 24J, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

Don Lindly, community education coordinator, Lincoln County School District, Newport, Oregon. Telephone interview May 22, 1985.

Al Miller, director of career and community education, Hillsboro Union High School District, Hillsboro, Oregon. Telephone interview April 16, 1985.

Carla Moyer, secondary business partnership coordinator, School District 24J, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

Elisa Steidel Reckendorf, library media teacher, Morningside Elementary School, School District 24J, Salem, Oregon. Telephone interview May 6, 1985.

Bret Rios, chairperson, business partnership steering committee and general manager, Viacom Cablevision, Salem, Oregon. Interview April 26, 1985.

# Appendix A

Organizational Resources

Copies of Business Partnership in Education available from:
School District 24J
Office of Federal, State and Community Relations
PO Box 12024
Salem, OR 97309
503-399-3038

Copies of 1985 Teleconference packets available for purchase from:
National Community Education Association
119 North Payne St
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-683-NCEA

Oregon Community Education Association
1724 Moss St
Eugene, OR 97403
503-686-3996

Public Responsibility for Educational Success
Old Queen's Building Room 302
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Private Initiatives in Public Education
1200 One Union Square
Sixth and University
Seattle, WA 98101
206-447-7244

Business Education Compact of Washington County
PO Box 500 Y3-439
Beaverton, OR 97077

# Appendix B

## Needs and Resource Assessment

**Business Partnership**
**Business Resource Assessment**

1. What kind of training or expertise do our employees have that could be shared with the school?

   computers, math_____
   athletics_____
   public speaking_____
   law_____
   government_____
   photography_____
   creative writing, journalism_____
   clothes and grooming_____
   crafts and hobbies_____
   safety, health_____
   graphic arts, printing_____
   agriculture_____
   other_____

2. Is the business willing to provide release time from work for employees for school activities?

3. Can we accommodate students for field trips at company sites?

4. What resources are available for providing incentive awards?

5. What resources are available for providing career awareness programs?

6. Are any of our employees interested in tutoring or other kinds of one-on-one activities with students?

7. Are we interested in working on or co-sponsoring fund raising or community service projects?

8. Would we be willing to serve on a school advisory committee?

9. Would we sponsor a student club or athletic event?

10. Do we have films, materials or other equipment we could lend the schools?

11. Are we able to teach mini-courses in the community school program?

12. Can the school help us by making its facilities available, by sponsoring classes for our employees, or in other ways?

11/47

# Appendix C

**Business Partnership**
**Survey for the Classroom Teacher**

**Elementary Program**

1. Which career education activities from Writing Across the Curriculum do you intend to use? Can your business partner help?

2. What other career education activities do you plan? How can your business partner be involved?

3. Would you like the business to sponsor a contest or a special interest club?

4. Do you have a student with a special need or interest that someone at the business might be able to help?

5. Are there other areas of the curriculum where a business person could help? Such people might include a computer expert, a toastmaster for pointers on public speaking, a speaker on grooming or clothes purchase, speakers on nutrition, safety, energy, money and banking.

6. Would you be interested in films and materials that the business might have? In what subject areas?

7. Any other ideas?

8. How might we share our resources with our business partner?

NOTE: The Career Awareness/Exploration Curriculum Kit, which is available in every school, has many activities listed that can help the classroom teacher give focus to field trips, speakers in the classroom, and interviews with business people.

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Appendix D

P.O. Box 12024 • Salem, Oregon 97309
William M. Kendrick, Superintendent

June 18, 1984

WILLIAM J. LIEBERTZ
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Office of Federal, State and Community Relations
(503) 399-3038

TO: Wes Ediger, North Salem High School
John McMillan, Statesman Journal Newspaper

FROM: Carla Moyer, Business Partnership Coordinator

SUBJECT: INITIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN NORTH SALEM HIGH SCHOOL AND THE STATESMAN-JOURNAL NEWSPAPER

At our meeting on June 18, 1984, we identified the following as the goals each partner wishes to attain through its involvement in the Business Partnership in Education program:

The newspaper's goals are:

1. To encourage newspaper reading by students and to try to determine why students tend not to read newspapers.

2. To identify students interested in careers in journalism and sales, with special emphasis on non-whites.

3. To learn more about the views of teachers and students of newspapers in general and the Statesman-Journal in particular.

4. To exercise the newspaper's social responsibility by assisting the school in whatever ways seem appropriate.

The goals of the program from the school's view are:

1. To provide students a greater understanding of what information is available in a daily newspaper in general and in the Statesman-Journal specifically.

2. To improve relationships among school administrators, faculty, students, and employees of the newspaper company.

3. To supplement what the school offers to teachers as resources in reaching the goals of the curriculum.

4. To expose students to the world of work in a practical way.

Furthermore, we conclude that our six focus areas would be: American government and politics; marketing and sales; journalism and the student newspaper; Japanese culture and international trade; economics and the free enterprise system; and graphics and photography.



Salem School District 24J complies with provisions of the various civil rights laws, such as the Fair Employment Practices Act, Title IX Regulations, and section 504 of PL 93-112 in employment and educational programs and activities.

We will accomplish the following by October 1, 1984:

1. North's vice principal for curriculum, its business partnership coordinator and the school district's coordinator will tour the newspaper and meet with the paper's representative, John Hawkins.

2. One of the Statesman-Journal's staff memebers will be teamed with a North Salem teacher in each of the six subject areas.

3. North's department coordinators and the six teachers named as team members will tour and meet with their counterparts at the paper.

4. An instructional unit for the Advanced American government class centered around the November election will be planned and ready for implementation.

If the preceding does not agree with your understanding of our discussion, please let me know and we'll make the necessary adjustments.

I'm excited about the possibilities that this partnership offers. Please feel free to call on me for any further assistance.

21/67

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